

retired in three columns about ten o'clock, by way of Genappe and Nivelles, towards Waterloo, leaving the cavalry, which arrived in the evening of the 16th, as a rear-guard to occupy the ground, so as to prevent the French from perceiving the retreat of the main body of the British army. About noon the French advanced in columns of attack, expecting to find the British in position. As the British infantry retired the cavalry gradually followed, watching the movements of the advancing French. The retrograde movement was conducted in excellent order. At Genappe an affair of cavalry took place, where the 7th British hussars attacked a French regiment of lancers unsuccessfully as it debouched from the town, and a second attack by the same regiment was attended with no better success. The French lancers, formed in a depression caused by the nature of the road, presented an immovable barrier of pikes, and, from the steepness of the banks, there was no approaching them in flank. The Earl of Uxbridge, seeing a more favorable opportunity, brought up the heavy cavalry, and, by a decisive charge, overthrew the advanced guard of the French, thus giving time to the infantry to take up its ground. A violent thunderstorm passed directly over both armies in the latter part of the afternoon, and the rain fell in such torrents that the fatigue of marching was greatly increased.

" As the British troops arrived in position in front of Mont St. Jean, they took up the ground they were to maintain early in the evening. The whole French army under Napoleon, about 71,000 men, not including the two corps under Marshal Grouchy, 32,000 men and 108 guns, despatched in pursuit of the Prussians on the road to Wavre, took up a position immediately in front, and after some cannonading both armies remained opposite to each other during the night, the rain falling in torrents. The Duke of Wellington had already communicated with Marshal Blucher,¹ who promised to come

¹ It has been stated that Blucher narrowly escaped being made prisoner at the battle of Ligny when his horse was struck by a cannon-shot while gallantly leading in person the Prussian lancers against the French cuirassiers. The horse he rode upon this occasion was a gray charger, given to him by the Prince Regent of England; he fell just at the moment when his cavalry